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NEXT GENERATION HUMANITIES PhD WHITE PAPER

The Value of Humanities in the Global City: Rethinking Culture and Opportunity in Detroit

Wayne State University

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Description of Project

The original goal of the Wayne State NEH Planning Grant was to build faculty support for rethinking the future of graduate education in the Humanities and to train faculty to become the Next Generation Mentors for the Next Generation of Humanities students. Our main strategy was to create a first cohort of Next Generation Faculty Fellows to become peer and student mentors in the new landscape of graduate education. Our proposed series of workshops on six central topics in rethinking the Humanities would be tailored to bring members of the Wayne State faculty into public dialogue on the future of Humanities and enhance knowledge of new scholarship and best practices in these areas. We sought to prepare faculty to be ambassadors for the work needed to shift faculty organizational culture from its traditional focus on academic scholarship and higher education to a more expansive idea of what a PhD can offer. This was and is particularly important in Detroit, the home of Wayne State, where there is an underserved population that seeks better access to graduate education, but also needs well-educated and engaged citizens with the analytical and communication tools necessary for its global needs.

The planning process entailed developing a series of “train-the-trainer” workshops to introduce an initial cohort of faculty fellows to essential skills, to create a sense of community and shared knowledge among Next Generation Humanities Faculty mentors. We also hoped to create a pilot program to engage the community and propose program changes necessary to give the Next Generation Humanities PhD students better professional development, career alternatives, and necessary resources to enhance and apply skills to new employment opportunities, especially in the realm of Public Humanities. In the process, we developed the idea of a Humanities Clinic, which we hoped to launch as a pilot program, to test out new ideas to expand the experience, skills, and opportunities of doctoral students.

One of our findings was that Wayne State already had an institutional legacy of placing doctoral students in diverse careers. We learned that we needed to trace that history and to articulate and integrate it into our own understanding of doctoral education. Because

our project was committed to exploring how to expand and enhance doctoral education in the humanities and social sciences, we wanted to learn from our alumni. By reaching out to and participating with community partners, faculty, alumni, and students, the Next Generation Humanities Ph.D. project committed itself to enhancing graduate curriculum and giving greater access to applied and public humanities within graduate programs, in order to better prepare the next generation of scholars for both academic and non-academic careers. Our chief accomplishment was to explore how to enhance faculty mentoring, reach out to broader public audiences, and enhance doctoral training through internships and a new opportunity—the Humanities Clinic, which would both give doctoral students in the broadly defined humanities new skills and experiences, and also give us ways to work with and expand upon relationships with community partners.

A) What Happened?

The Next Generation Humanities PhD grant was put into effect in August of 2016. We began with the re-creation of the Steering Committee, which consisted of seven faculty members from the Humanities and Social Sciences. It also included the hiring of a Graduate Student Assistant, who we later hired as the Project Assistant.

The Advisory Committee consists of Elizabeth Faue (Project Director, History), Sharon Lean (Political Science), Lisa Maruca (English), Elena Past (CMLLC), Krysta Ryzewski (Anthropology), with Jane Ferreyra (WSU Press; alumna). The Graduate Student Assistant, Esmat Ishag-Osman, is a Ph.D. student from the Political Science department.

Our next step was to solicit applications and select six Faculty Mentoring Fellows from the Humanities and Social Sciences. The Faculty Mentoring Fellows includes: Lisabeth Hock (Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures), Yuson Jung (Anthropology), Karen Marrero (History), Caroline Maun (English), Rahul Mitra (Communications), and Tracy Neumann (History).

After the recruitment of the six Faculty Mentoring Fellows, we secured additional funding for the Faculty Mentoring Program from the Graduate School. This allowed us to select two additional mentoring fellows and to fund a second year of the program. Additionally, we applied for and received a Humanities Center Working Group award for any additional workshop costs.

Seven major workshops were held that were geared towards faculty, students, staff, and community partners. These eight workshops included:

- 1) ***Inside the Graduate School Mess*, Lecture by Leonard Cassuto – September 22, 2016, sponsored by the English Department; Mentoring Workshop sponsored by Department of History**

- 2) **Launch Program, *Crisis in the Humanities*, October 19, 2016**, presentations by **Project Director Elizabeth Faue**, and **Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Andrew Feig**, and a **panel of doctoral alumni** with diverse career paths (Rory Bolger, Detroit City Planning Commission (PhD Anthropology WSU); Dennis Nordmoe, Director of Strategic Development, Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (PhD Political Science); Casandra E. Ulrich, Vice President for College Advancement and Community Relations, Macomb Community College (PhD Communications); Charles D. Smith, Vice President for Research, Forum for Youth Investment (PhD Political Science)).
- 3) **Digital Humanities Workshop**, organized by Lisa Maruca, **November 9, 2016**, included **Julie Thompson-Klein, Office of the Vice President for Research and Network Detroit**, alumna **Andrea Silva**, and **Nathan Kelber, Detroit Historical Society**
- 4) **Internship Workshop**, organized by Krysta Ryzewski and Andrea Sankar, Anthropology – **December 7, 2016**, included **Office of Teaching and Learning Director, Matthew Ouellett; Arlinda Pringle, WSU Career Services Office; Jane Ferreyra, Wayne State University Press; Anwar Najor-Durack, School of Social Work; Michael Henson, doctoral student, Joint Social Work-Anthropology program**
- 5) **Communicating with a Broader Audience Workshop, February 8, 2017**, included panelists **Saeed Khan, Near Eastern Studies and History**, who writes for Al Jazeera and several online platforms; **Jack Lessenberry, Journalism**, who also has covered Michigan politics in newspapers and on National Public Radio; **Jennifer Hart, History**, who has worked in digital humanities and is developing an interactive website; **John Corvino, Philosophy**, who writes for a public audience
- 6) **Environmental Humanities and Community Engagement Roundtable – March 8, 2017**, included panelists **Susan Parrish, English, University of Michigan; Kami Pothukuchi, Urban Studies and Planning; Ashleigh Day, PhD Student, Communication; and Daryl Pierson, Sustainability Coordinator, Wayne State University**
- 7) **Next Gen Humanities PhD Stakeholder Meeting— May 10, 2017**, focused on developing an internship program and a Humanities Clinic, received feedback from students, and reached out to new community partners

Throughout the school year, we identified and worked with PhD alumni from Wayne State University, which became a continual process. We used surveys to capture feedback from workshop participants. The data from faculty and graduate students provided us with additional information on faculty and students' perceptions of graduate education. Toward the end of the school year, we administered a Faculty Culture Survey to all Graduate Faculty in the Humanities and Social Sciences. We distributed 445 surveys across campus.

We had a 27% response rate. The surveys yielded crucial data for improving doctoral education in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

For our grant program, we launched a new internship model for doctoral programs, the Humanities Clinic. The Humanities Clinic is modeled on a law school's Legal Clinic. In early Spring, we constructed a framework for the Humanities Clinic. In May, we hired an Internship Coordinator (Josiah Rector, a History Ph.D. alumnus) to start organizing a pilot Internship Program for five doctoral students. We placed three of our interns in traditional internship programs, two with the Wayne State University and one with WDET, a public radio station in Detroit affiliated with WSU. The other two interns are working in the Humanities Clinic. All interns are expected to work a minimum of 90 hours on project work, with another ten hours set aside for attending collective meetings with the Internship Coordinator and writing a summary report. We also asked our doctoral interns to contribute to our social media feed. Finally, we sought ways to recruit Humanities and Social Sciences doctoral students across the university, in a joint effort to expand professional development. The Project Director is currently working with the Graduate School on alumni tracking and professional development workshops.

Wayne State University Humanities Clinic: Pilot Program Summer 2017

On June 25, 2017, we launched our WSU Humanities Clinic Summer Pilot Program, based in Faculty Administration Building Room 3073. Modeled after a legal clinic, our Humanities Clinic provided doctoral students with practical experience in the public humanities, under the guidance of an internship coordinator. Rather than sending internships to work on-site with community partners, we offered research, grant-writing, graphic design, and community outreach services to community partners from a single hub at Wayne State University. Our two Humanities Clinic interns, Kathryn Slocum and Samantha Ellens, are doctoral students in Anthropology, specializing in Historical Archaeology under the supervision of Dr. Krysta Rzyzewski. Their experience working in museums and archives, and their skills in grant-writing, copy-editing, and graphic design, made Kathryn and Samantha excellent candidates for this pilot program.

On June 13, we distributed a Request for Proposals to 78 community partners, along with several hundred Wayne State University faculty in the Humanities and in STEM fields. We requested proposals for Humanities Clinic research projects. The deadline for submitting proposals was July 8, and the deadline for completing projects was August 16. We received an impressive response, quickly taking up the 180 hours of available work time for interns.

Our first research project, conducted between July 3 and July 21, was for *Jewish Family Service*, based at two locations in metropolitan Detroit (Oak Park and Bloomfield Hills). Jewish Family Service is a human service provider for the Jewish community in metropolitan Detroit, focusing on the elderly and families in need, including Holocaust survivors and recent immigrants to the United States. For this project, Kathryn Slocum gathered photos and historical documents from the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs. Using this historical material, Kathryn developed a historical compilation for

the organization's 90th anniversary in 2018. This project involved 50 hours of work, including 25 hours of archival research and 25 hours of writing and editing.

For our second research project, we worked with the *Inside Out Literary Arts Project*, a 501-C (3) non-profit that provides creative writing and performance workshops for Detroit K-12 students. In 2009, *Inside Out* received a National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award for its outstanding contribution to youth arts education in Detroit. Our intern for this project, Samantha Ellens, served the organization by reviewing Inside Out's data collection procedures for Citywide Poets, an award-winning after-school program for Detroit Youth ages 13-19. Samantha used the current databases of Inside Out staff members to track the accomplishments of Citywide Poets participants, both during and after their graduation from the program. This data collection review, which Samantha completed in 60 hours, will help Citywide Poets secure grant funding to continue and expand this vital program.

For an additional project, Kathryn Slocum conducted research for the *Evelyn Scott Society*. Professor Caroline Maun, Department of English, Wayne State University, directs this volunteer organization, which preserves the legacy of the American novelist, playwright, and poet Evelyn Scott (1893-1963). This research, completed in 20 hours, included compiling a bibliography of recent scholarship and digital media content on the life and work of Evelyn Scott.

The Humanities Clinic also received proposals from the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, the Wayne State University Center for Peace Studies, and the Wayne State University Honors College, among other local organizations and institutions. Unfortunately, we were forced to turn down several proposals owing to lack of time during our short pilot program.

The Humanities Clinic has already succeeded beyond our expectations this summer. For our community partners, our interns are providing valuable research, writing, and design services in vital areas in which our partners were short of staff and funding. The unique structure of the Humanities Clinic also enabled us to provide services more flexibly than a traditional internship model, allowing us to meet the needs of community partners who could not provide on-site supervision. For our interns, the Humanities Clinic is offering rich professional development opportunities. It also helps to build their resumes and strengthen future job applications. Our experience this summer suggests that an enlarged Humanities Clinic, with more funding for interns and longer timetables for projects, could achieve even more impressive results. We would like to develop a curriculum module that will further enhance the experience, enrich skills, and expand employment opportunities for our doctoral students/interns. We are seeking funding for an expanded second year of the program.

B) What Worked and What Didn't?

The first thing we did was to develop objectives for our Next Generation Humanities Project, including goals to change faculty culture, develop new graduate curriculum, and

engage with the community. We then set out goals to serve as the guidelines for how we designed and directed grant activities throughout the year. These six goals consisted of:

- 1) Articulate how Wayne State University offers a unique educational program. Specifically, we should explain how our program is suited to the new Humanities landscape and communicate our strong record of training students in alternative careers. We also need, as part of this, to develop and enrich alumni networks.
- 2) Persuade graduate faculty across campus who might be inadequately or misinformed about alternative career pathways for doctoral students or have some resistance to changing time-honored doctoral curriculum
- 3) Propose and develop curricular changes which:
 - a. emphasize interdisciplinary and translatable skills
 - b. develop new internship opportunities
 - c. create interdisciplinary graduate peer cohorts
- 4) Advocate for and educate graduate faculty in new models for advising and mentoring in doctoral programs. This includes the possibility of expanding or revising committee eligibility to non-academic members, especially those involved in mentoring and/or supervising internships or practical/applied dissertations.
- 5) Create a pilot program and improved curriculum for PhD internships, and developing a Humanities Clinic for PhD internships.
- 6) Develop new/alternative dissertation models.

These objectives allowed our steering committee to narrow our focus, providing us with the framework for how to structure the school year. It made it possible for us to follow a schedule and obtain the necessary information and contacts to make the grant effective.

In support of these goals, we collected data from a large sample of Graduate Faculty, primarily in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The survey allowed us to gain insight into faculty culture across Wayne State University. It provided us with information about how Graduate Faculty understand the current state of doctoral education, and the need for alternative career options for doctoral students. It also allowed us to gauge faculty responses to possible reforms of doctoral education.

We faced some challenges this year. First, our grant activities, while well attended, could have been better publicized and better attended. We in particular felt that we needed to connect better with doctoral students in the project to overcome whatever resistance or pessimism they may have toward changes in doctoral education. A majority of attendees were faculty members and staff. Second, we need to continue to expand our relationships with community partners in Detroit—something we have started to address with the Humanities Clinic. While a few community partners attended our events throughout the

year, we have need to put more time into outreach and connect with units in the university that might have the resources and networks to support us in this project. We need to find more effective ways to communicate our mission for the Next Generation Humanities Ph.D. project with community partners and to re-engage with university administrators who have supported us but have not been as well engaged with our subsequent work. In contrast, we had the most success with outreach to faculty and staff. Moving forward, we need to convince community partners that doctoral students from the Humanities have skills that can benefit their organizations.

C) What Does It All Mean?

In the summer of 2017, we are piloting a Humanities Clinic Internship model that has garnered support from faculty, students, community partners, and others. For Fall 2017, we were able to secure additional funding from the Graduate School for the Faculty Mentoring Program, which allows for a second year of that aspect of the program. The Humanities Center Working Group also awarded us funding for additional workshop costs. We have begun to work on the next stage of the project, guided by our experience this year.

Most of the standards for doctoral dissertations in the Humanities continue to promote the conventional, “proto-book” research product. There is some support from Graduate Faculty at Wayne State University for expanding alternative options for PhDs. An overwhelming majority of the respondents to our Faculty Culture Survey expressed support for alternative doctoral training or dissertation models. The survey of graduate faculty found that 90% of faculty think their department should be preparing graduate students for both the academic and the non-academic job market. The survey also found that 68.64% of respondents supported including interdisciplinary courses in the graduate curriculum, in order to prepare graduate students for non-academic careers.

Out of 122 respondents, only 26% of faculty thought their department was doing a good job of preparing graduate students for the non-academic job market. About 31% of respondents felt their department was not doing a good job, and 43% of respondents felt their department “might” be doing a good job. Additionally 64% of respondents did not think their departmental requirements for Ph.D. students prepared students equally for a broad range of careers. Given the well-documented problems facing doctoral education in the humanities across the country, these survey results were very telling.

When asked whether a humanities clinic would be a useful part of their department’s Ph.D. curriculum, an overwhelming majority of graduate faculty answered “Yes” or “Maybe.” The “Humanities Clinic” is based on the law-clinic model which would involve supervised graduate students who provide services such as editing, archival work, grant writing for the general public, and other services. Out of 119 respondents, 35% responded “Yes” to a humanities clinic, and 45% answered “maybe.” Only 20% of respondents answered “No” to a humanities clinic.

When asked whether an internship option was a useful part of their Ph.D. curriculum, 54% of the respondents answered “Yes” while 35% of respondents answered “Maybe.” These

results suggest that a majority of faculty support implementing an internship model to provide their students with experience for nonacademic careers.

This project has increased faculty awareness of the need to train students for career opportunities in nonacademic fields. Faculty have also expressed concern about access to resources for non-academic career training. In the survey, 62% of respondents answered “No” when asked if they felt that they had the tools they needed to advise Wayne State Ph.D. students on the non-academic job market. A majority of graduate faculty lack the training and institutional support to advise their doctoral students on the non-academic job market.

Some departments have some sort of internship option to offer their students, but a majority of students do not take advantage of these opportunities. While focusing on coursework, exams, and dissertations, doctoral students often neglect professional development, particularly for nonacademic careers. They may fear that added work outside of the program will slow their progress toward the PhD. Moreover, departments typically do not stress the importance or necessity of these opportunities. In the survey, 91% of respondents felt that internships being a part of the Ph.D. curriculum should be optional and not mandatory. Most of the internships are also not funded, which creates a fundamental barrier to experiential learning at the doctoral level.

At our stakeholders meeting at the end of the year, we asked graduate students about their ideas and concerns regarding doctoral education. Some graduate students felt they did not have support from the Wayne State system, and they were not able to answer the question “why am I doing a PhD?” Conversely, some believed that departments and the University could not answer the question: “Why are we educating PhDs?” Some complained that faculty only wanted to pass on skills geared to the academic job market, offering vague assurances along the lines of “you’ll find something and eventually you’ll find your way.”

Additionally, some students wondered if employers take a PhD in the Humanities seriously. Many did not know what business jobs entail and how to apply for them. Many students did not know how to break down the components of what they know how to do. For example, there are many skills involved in teaching - acquiring information and making critical judgments as to what and how information can be shared with students in lectures or discussion; public speaking; interpersonal skills honed through constant interactions with students; time management; adjudicating and assessing the work of students; etc. Employers prize these skills, but some doctoral students had trouble identifying them or articulating what they might mean to potential employers.

All of this indicated a need to continue this program and expand on it. There is a need to change the culture of academia, to emphasize training for both academic and nonacademic careers. These sentiments from students at our stakeholder’s meeting echo those of many doctoral students across the country and in most disciplines. Until recently, there has been too little discussion about the changing job market that doctoral graduates are entering. Clearly, now is the time to start acting and addressing these concerns.

In summary, we believe that what the first year has taught us is how we are on the right path in improving doctoral education and better training our doctoral students for a diverse and highly segmented landscape of employment. We also need to teach our students and ourselves how to better articulate—and for more public audiences—what the Humanities do and what Humanities (and Social Science) scholars can do. Finally, we know that the Humanities are the arena to which people look for meaning—What they may not know, and we need to be better at doing this, is that the broadly defined Humanities also know how to articulate that meaning and use it to shape new tools of communication and engagement. Building these things into graduate training and into faculty and community relationships will improve our programs and answer vital needs.

D) What's Next?

The next step for this program is to develop sustainable resources, develop new placement services, and intern recruitment for the Humanities Clinic and our larger project going forward. As we test out our ideas in the pilot doctoral student internship program in summer 2017, we will design a new curriculum module for an alternative doctoral program and continue reaching out to alumni and building our network of community partners. We also need to recruit a second cohort of faculty mentoring fellows and find ways (until we put together other resources and grants) to expand our program.

In our stakeholders' workshop, and in previous interviews with doctoral alumni, we discovered that students need people they can talk to in their departments about getting jobs outside academia. One possibility for meeting this need is the *Doctor Is In* model, in which graduate faculty members make themselves to meet with any doctoral student. Such meetings allow doctoral students to ask important questions, express concerns, and create personal relationships with faculty. Currently, these conversations have commonly been restricted to a student's advisor or the Graduate Director. Opening such conversations up to a broader faculty-student community could well provide new resources, networks, and information that students need when seeking more diverse career paths.

Depending on what stage they are at in their programs, graduate students require different types of guidance or information. For example, course work is a time of exploration for graduate students. Once this is completed, mentoring of graduate students should not end. It needs, instead, to be broadened. After course work, when students are often isolated from their peer group, there is, paradoxically, a greater need for peer group support. Peer support should not only include dissertation writing, but also professional development. There should be a better relationship between Career Services and the Graduate School to offer guidance and resources for students. Only recently have graduate students and faculty become aware that Career Services provided any kind of guidance for graduate students. Although the Career Services Office does offer their services to graduate students, they are geared generally toward students in sciences and engineering. We will need to address this gap, by increasing resources and by trying to utilize existing resources for Humanities and Social Science graduate students as well.

In addition, we might try to develop professionalization workshops within each doctoral program. Students need to know how to identify and sell their skills. These workshops could cover a variety of subjects, including:

- How to write an abstract
- How to come up with an elevator pitch
- How to apply for internal and external funding sources
- How to write a good cover letter
- How to identify, prepare for, and operate at conferences
- How to find and connect with think tanks
- How to conduct oneself in academic and non-academic interviews
- How to highlight and market skills students already possess and those they've developed

Departments could come together to offer interdisciplinary brown bags, professional development workshops and meetings, and other campus and community events for students. This would not only improve turnout among graduate students, but also help students connect across departments and build peer support networks. We will need to look for new partnerships outside the university that expand and enhance internships with community partners and develop relationships with them in common projects.

Next year, we will further develop our curriculum as we design the syllabus for the Humanities Clinic, explore other ways of formalizing skill development and recognition, and work with faculty mentoring fellows to expand our professional development training.